THE TRANSPORTATION LINK

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It is so nice to finally have spring arriving! I hope you will be able to enjoy it.

The theme of this month's *Transportation Link* is electronic commerce. It is critical for small businesses to adapt to the ever-changing environment within federal procurement.

Electronic commerce is rapidly becoming an integral part of the procurement process within the Department of Transportation (DOT.) Be sure you learn how to use the electronic commerce tools that will help you do business with the DOT.

This month's success story features a recent MED Week Winner, Theresa Cheung whose company — TYC, Inc. — has done such wonderful work in the Information Technology (IT) arena.

I thank everyone for your interest to learn more about DOT's new Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) regulation. We are continuously posting more information on this important regulation on OSDBU's DBE page.

Lastly, the Year 2000 (Y2K) is rapidly approaching. I hope all of you are taking the necessary steps to become Y2K compliant. We have developed a Y2K page on the OSDBU web site that hyperlinks to very valuable information on Y2K.

Are you Y2K OK?

DOT Participates In Electronic Posting System Pilot Program

The movement to integrate electronic commerce (e-commerce or EC) into traditional Department of Transportation (DOT) contracting methods is rapidly expanding. Any firm that wants to conduct business with DOT needs to be familiar with the tools of e-commerce. In the future, DOT will announce, buy and pay for most products and services electronically.

E-Commerce

E-commerce is best defined as the electronic exchange of business information via Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), e-mail, Electronic Bulletin Boards (EBBs), Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), and the Internet. As DOT moves to streamline procurement processes with electronic purchasing methods, its trading partners will be expected to implement these new practices to remain competitive.

The July 1998 edition of the *Transportation Link* featured a lead article on Electronic Commerce, an article on Government Credit Cards, and an article on the Electronic Commerce Resource Center Program. It can be accessed electronically at http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/translink/jul98/index.htm This edition of the *Transportation Link* focuses on electronic tools that are available to learn about procurement opportunities within DOT, with special emphasis on the *Electronic Posting System* (*EPS*).

CBD and FACNET

The *Commerce Business Daily* (*CBD*) and the *Federal Acquisition Computer Network* (*FACNET)* have historically been the tools that federal agencies have used to post electronic information on procurement opportunities.

On a daily basis, OSDBU posts transportation-related *CBD* announcements on the OSDBU web site for you to review. They can be accessed at http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/consolic.htm The *CBD* can also be accessed directly at http://cbdnet.gpo.gov/ *FACNET* sites have not historically been used as heavily by DOT as they have by the Department of Defense, and a few other Federal agencies. *FACNET* can generally be accessed through Value Added Networks (VANs). The Electronic Commerce Resource Centers (ECRCs), accessed at http://www.ecrc.ctc.com , can provide more information on this.

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DOT Operating Administration Web Sites

Several of the DOT OAs have additional local procurement opportunities posted on national or regional OA web sites. OSDBU has assembled a listing of these web sites, with hyperlinks, on the OSDBU web site. (They can be accessed, along with a listing of state DOT procurement opportunity web sites, at http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/consolic.htm)

Procurement Forecast

On an annual basis DOT publishes a *Procurement Forecast,* a collection of procurement opportunities that the DOT Operating Administrations (OAs) plan to make available during the next fiscal year. A searchable version of the Procurement Forecast is posted on the OSDBU web site.

On a regular basis, throughout the fiscal year, the OAs update this information via the Internet. Contact information is included in the description of each opportunity. A listing of the Small Businesses Specialists at each of the OAs is included also. The *FY99 Procurement Forecast* can be accessed on the OSDBU web site at http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/consolic.htm

EPS

EPS is a web-based system for posting solicitations and other procurement-related documents to the Internet. EPS was developed by NASA, enhanced by GSA, and is currently being implemented throughout the government in a pilot program and many DOT OAs are participating. EPS can help agencies comply with a legal requirement for a single, government-wide point of entry (DOD Authorization Act of 1998) for government buyers and vendors.

This pilot project allows DOT's OAs to publicize business opportunities di-

ELECTRONIC POSTING SYSTEM
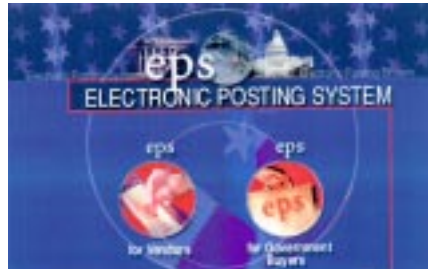
rectly on the Internet. Vendors will now have the capability to receive detailed information about business opportunities from all of DOT's OAs at a single location. Contract specialists can compose and post documents from their desktop, diminishing the need to use other parties to put documents on-line.

Unlike the Internet site for the Commerce Business Daily (CBD *Net*), EPS indexes each synopsis so that vendors need only go to one place to find all the results that meet their specific needs with a minimal amount of searching. Documents are posted against the synopsis, creating a central repository for all the documents related to an acquisition. Vendors can currently search the requirements for participating agencies at http://eps.gov/ .

EPS streamlines the procurement process by eliminating duplicative databases and creates a "one-stop" shopping location for vendors searching the web site for contracting opportunities. Agencies see EPS as an excellent use of burgeoning Internet technology which has become the vehicle of choice for complying with a federal initiative to encourage e-commerce at all levels of the business process.

The system also has e-mail registration at: http://eps.gov that allows vendors to register for particular types of solicitations. According to Lesley Field, Procurement Analyst in DOT's Office Acquisition and Grant Management, 7000 vendors are currently registered to receive solicitation notices.

"The advantage of EPS is that it consolidates *DOT's* requirements and

posts relevant documents about those requirements to the Internet," says Field.

"CBD *Net* does not have the complete document uploading capability that EPS has. EPS automates this step in the procurement process for DOT's small business vendors and buyers."

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Uniited States Coast Guard (USCG) were among the first DOT OAs to begin posting procurement information to the EPS system during 1998.

DOT Procurement Analyst, Lesley Field

As of March 1999, FHWA was posting 100% of its solicitations on EPS. Expect other OAs to soon follow as DOT moves closer to complying with the federal mandate for a single, government-wide point of entry for all federal customers.

EPS can also be accessed from the OSDBU web site at http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/consolic.htm .

Conclusion

E-commerce is rapidly changing the way we conduct federal procurement. Currently there are a host of access tools that small and disadvantaged businesses can use to learn about procurement opportunities within DOT. It is important for you to become familiar with all of these tools, and to enter the world of electronic commerce!

For more information on OSDBU contracting opportunities posted on the web site, contact Joan Tannen at 800-532-1169 or by e-mail at jtannen@basetech.com. For more information on EPS, contact Lesley Field at 202-366-4960 or by e-mail at lesley.field@ost.dot.gov

TYC, Inc. Promising Solutions "That Last"

This month the *Transportation Link* features the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) 1998 Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week Award Winner, Theresa Cheung of TYC Associates. Cheung has led TYC Associates, an 8(a) information technology (IT) firm, through exploding growth in recent years.

1998 MED Week Award Winner, Theresa Cheung

TYC Inc. is a systems integrator and software developer, delivering innovative technology solutions to commercial and federal customers. They strive to achieve the highest levels of enhanced technical capability and cost efficiency.

Founded in 1986, this woman-owned business enterprise (WBE) touts its analytical ability and technical expertise as its top deliverable. Cheung was an assistant systems analyst and software designer in various corporate concerns, large and small, before she started her own business.

"I come from a technical background, and am always looking for a better way to do things, says Cheung.

"I picked up the challenge of starting a business. I thought I could make a bigger impact in a controlling position."

When Cheung started her business she had no employees and offered her technical consulting expertise as the company's primary service offering.

In TYC's first year of operation, corporate revenues were in the range of $50 thousand per year. In 1998, they grossed $ 5 million and now employ 60 people.

Recently, TYC has invested in high-end, emerging technologies as they prepare to transition into private economic sectors with commercially marketable software products. Cheung knows exactly where she is taking her company.

"I believe in technology. Especially creating Inter and Intranet, web based corporate capability. This particular technology is becoming more and more critical to commercial processes," says a determined Cheung.

"I always follow the technology, and wherever it goes, TYC wants to be the first to get there."

In the emerging E-commerce industry, TYC administers several federal contracts in and out of DOT doing front-end web work with grantee applications, electronic submission and status checking, as well as other "over-the-net" transactions. In addition, TYC is building a server application for tracking grants. "Everything we design is Y2K compliant," says Cheung.

TYC's aggressive commercial web site exemplifies its successful marketing strategy. It positions the company as uniquely qualified to provide the highest standards of IT solutions best.

On the 8(a) program, Cheung says: "The 8(a) vehicle doesn't guarantee you business anymore, although it's still a great way to get started. But you can't live off of 8(a) contracts. That's why the program has a lot of transition checkpoints that forces companies to grow out of the program. We used the 8 (a) certification to build up our business and establish a reputation."

Cheung's solution for winning business and keeping it is, "Deliver what you promise and provide a solution that will last."

For more information about TYC, Inc. call (301) 231-9898 or visit their website at: http://www.tyc.com/ or e-mail at marketing@tyc.com

DBE Update

Thank you for the positive feedback we have received on the new Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program regulation web page we created at http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/programs/dbe/dbe.htm.

Many of our customers have told us that the recently posted documents on that page have been very helpful in clarifying the purpose and intent of the regulation.

One of these documents is *Paving the Road to Equal Opportunity – Key issues in the new rule.* This three-page summary highlights the new regulation's three major goals:

- To create a level playing field on which DBEs can compete fairly;
- To mend but not end the DBE program; and
- To make the DBE program more effective and efficient for all participants.

In the near future a new set of Questions and Answers will be posted further clarifying more of the critical issues addressed within the new DBE regulations.

New OSDBU Y2K Web Page

Are you Y2K OK? The "Year 2000" problem may affect your business in countless ways.

To learn more about this issue and how you can become Y2K compliant, click on the Y2K logo on the OSDBU Home Page at: http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/doty2k.htm .

OSDBU has assembled a collection of Year 2000 resources to assist the small and disadvantaged business community, including the DOT Y2K web page, the SBA Y2K web page and information on the Commerce Department *Y2K Jumpstart Kit.*

Th*e Y2K Jumpstart Kit* developed under a Commerce Department program is available to help small businesses better deal with the year 2000 computer problem. Be sure to check back on a regular basis. We will be adding more Y2K resources continuously.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR April/May 1999

Date	Place	Contact
April 19-22	Ninth Annual Meeting and Exposition of the Intelligent Transportation Society of America Washington, DC	Katrina Mayo (202) 484-4549 www.itsa.org e-mail: sfitzgerald @itsa.org
April 27 (Offered Routinely) Sponsored by SBA	Business Development 8(a) Eligibility Briefing - FY 99 Washington, DC	Eugene Swaney (202) 606-4000 ext.306
May 12	Small Business Transportation Exchange at Florida Atlantic University Miami, FL	Enrique Carillo or Monica Alvarez LOSP Region III & IV (800) 448-2585
May 13	9th Annual Procurement Opportunities Conference/Expo Upper Marlboro, MD	Pat Hodge or Angela Dilver-Dendy (800) 532-1169 Ext. 61791
May 19	Women Business Enterprise Day FHWA/FRA/NHTSA DOT Nassif Building, Room: 6200-6204 Washington, DC	Debbie Ridgely (202) 366-4233
May 17-21	Canada / U.S.A. Businesswomen's Trade Summit '99 Royal York Hotel in Toronto, Ontario	Andrina Lever (416) 920-5114 Fax: (416) 920-6764 andrina@ibm.net
May 27	SDB (Small Disadvantaged Business) Conference on New SDB Regulations Sponsored by SBA Seattle, WA.	Diana Drake, SBA (206) 553-7341 diana.drake@sba.gov
May 27	FAA Women Business Enterprise Day FAA Headquarters, Washington, DC	Pat Hodge or Angela Dilver-Dendy (800) 532-1169 Ext. 61791

http://osdbuweb.dot.gov